



DAD



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Ira Ambrose Martin - Dad 1888 - 1936  
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I can't explain it, but it really is strange. Pep and Ray always say Daddy when we talk about him, but I always say our father. I don't know why. I know all he cared about was Mom and us kids. I can only remember the memories stored in my head. I can't make up any. I know we drove back from Georgia in some kind of vehicle. I remember Mom giving a flat box of fudge to someone when we got gas. I always thought it was to pay for the gas, but maybe it wasn't. But I don't remember seeing our father again until we lived on 14<sup>th</sup> street - Newkirk now. I remember him carrying me to Sydenham Hospital (now Bayview) when I was about three or four with Diphtheria. I learned the other day, that Pep had it, too. Maybe we gave it to each other. One of the reasons I'm putting all this down is because Ray didn't know much about our father. He was two or three when he died. I also want my family to know some things about him. It was about 1929, he would



go out front and shoot his old shot gun accross the railroad tracks. I'm guessing, but it was probably New Year. I never heard it shot again. The last track of it about 1939.

I must have gotten it from him because he always had a sort of club with neighborhood kids. When he wasn't sick, he would take us on hikes and have watermelon parties. He would go to the clay hills and slide down on makeshift sleds. Most of my family didn't know that during World War I many of the soldiers contracted Influenza (Flu). It killed more American soldiers than the Germans did. Through the years, my father came down with Tuberculosis, a disease of the lungs. They called it T.B.

Another thing I remember, he walked us down to Halbird Ave. where a train hit a streetcar. I don't remember the count of casualties, but when we were walking back, a car hit a little boy and killed him. He lived next door. His name was Allen. They do me



remember things like that? Moving on to Graceland Park, the only thing I remember there is we still had a car. It was a Pontiac about a 1915. He drove us to Logan Field to watch the planes come in. He moved to Nobel St. when the country was allowed to drink alcohol legally again. 1933. Our father wasn't a drinker but I remember about six guys got into a brawl and they took them all in. I was standing out front and watched it all happen.

Moving on to Leverton Ave, the Pontiac was retired to the back yard, never to run again.

I remember my father would send me to the Drug Store to buy him a plug of apple chewing tobacco. I never did see him drink or smoke. Once in a while he would chew tobacco or have a cigar. The only reason I remember that is because whichever one of us got him the cigar, he would give him the band and we would wear it like a ring. Ray was born in this house 3414. 3409

When we moved to 3409 our dad



was going downhill fast. It was very hard for him when he had to walk me and Junior downtown to Juvenile Court for fighting with Freddy the Wop. He would send me around to the Bakery to get a piece of bread wrapping paper about the size of a fully opened newspaper. And with pencil and ruler, he would draw a design of a house he was going to build for us. All eight of us were living there then.

I think Pop will remember this. Dad had a beautiful penmanship. It looked like the signature of John Hancock - check it out. I also remember that he was the secretary of an organization called "The Kokie Shirts". He must have been pretty smart. I don't know any more about that.

Our father had a leather strap and he would lay it on us boys when we needed it. He still loved him though. One time he took me and Junior down to the cellar and he was strapping us good. After a few minutes, he was so out of breath. He was sitting on the bottom step



and couldn't catch his breath. He were both crying because we were so worried. That's all on that.

My father was on his death bed and he called me and explained to me how to put a sliding bolt on the back door, because we only had a little lock. I must have gotten it from the hardware store and I got it o.k. I was only nine. It's hard to believe that he seemed so old to us. But he died at 48. That's two years younger than my youngest son, Bud.

From Leverton Ave, they took my father to Sabili'sville, that's about ten miles north of Thermont. The old train tracks are still there. Mom and Pop went to see him there but I never did. From there, he went to City Hospital, where he died.

Some thing else, Ray or I didn't know. Dad joined the Army in 1915 and he became a 1<sup>st</sup> sergeant. When we lived on Hennaman Ave, we would play with his old shot gun. My mother had a new little gas stove, the first one she ever had. He had a big old trunk filled with papers and pictures.



We had a couch, a kitchen table and chairs. My mother must have had dishes and pots and pans. We had two beds and mattresses. I know we had a little radio. That's about all we had.

What bothers me is what ever happened to our stuff when they took us away and our house was vacant? I wonder how long it was before some other family moved in. Like Sharon said

"You can never go home."

P.S. Something else just came to mind. I remember I was stung by a bee on my ear lobe and my father put tobacco juice on it and the pain went away.

He was married in 1923. Junior was born in 1924, Susan born in 1925, Pep in 1927, Eddie in 1930, Helen in 1933, Ray in 1934. Dad died in 1936 - I'm pretty sure of all the dates.

Jim